SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION

CITY OF SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA

Lower Level – Room 40, City Hall/Court House, 15 West Kellogg Boulevard March 25, 2010

Present: Robert Ferguson, Jennifer Haskamp, Pat Igo, Rich Laffin, John Manning, David

Riehle, Steve Trimble, Diane Trout-Oertel

Absent: Sherry Enzler (unexcused), April Haas (excused), Matt Mazanec (excused),

Lee Meyer (excused), Mark Thomas (excused)

Staff Present: Amy Spong, Christine Boulware, Michelle Wood

PUBLIC HEARING

CALL TO ORDER: 5:05 PM by John Manning (Chair)

- I. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA Laffin, Igo (8-0)
- II. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST Agenda Item VI.D. Ferguson & Manning

III. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS -

A. Appoint a commissioner to sit on the Public Art Saint Paul Stewardship Committee. Commissioner Laffin volunteered. They will meet Wednesday, March 31 at 10:30am.

IV. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS – New meeting room set up and equipment. The new microphones are very sensitive. Anyone presenting to the commission or giving testimony should sign in at the front desk or at the podium.

V. NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION

A. Phalen Park Arch Bridge Rehabilitation – presentation by Scott Nesvold, Olson & Nesvold Engineers, P.S.C.

The bridge has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The work that is proposed will require an Army Corp of Engineers permit and that will kick in the Section 106 process. MacDonald and Mack, Mead & Hunt and TKDA have been working on this project along with Olson & Nesvold Engineers.

A presentation on the bridge condition and proposed renovation/reconstruction was shown. Commissioner Trimble questioned why the design was not going back to the original 1910 design, but the 1934 WPA design. The WPA design has been on the bridge longer and is best associated with it. The decking on the bridge will be lowered so that the rail height from the inside will be 42 inches. Commissioner Laffin had comments about avoiding future spalling. Nesvold explained the new approach panels would move the water further from the bridge. Trimble stated he would have liked to see both designs for the bridge project.

VI. PERMIT REVIEW/PUBLIC HEARING/AFTER-THE-FACT REVIEW

A. 325 Laurel Avenue, Hill Historic District, by Saint Paul Public Housing Authority, for a building permit to install solar panels on the roof. **File #10-014** (Boulware, 266-6715).

Staff presented the report recommending denial of the application. Al Hester was present to testify along with other SPPHA staff. He acknowledged the challenge between energy efficiency and the built environment. He stated they received a 3 million dollar stimulus grant and that solar energy would augment the boilers at the site. Commissioner Trimble

asked why the SPPHA did not discuss the project with HPC staff earlier in the process since they knew it was in a historic district. Hester stated that he wished they had, but had to move quickly to meet the deadline. A resident, Mary Ann, testified that emissions have an affect on the historic district.

The public hearing was closed. Commissioner Riehle motioned to approve the application as proposed. Commissioner Laffin seconded the motion. Commissioner Trimble offered an amendment to add screening on the north side of the roof. The amendment was not accepted by Commissioner Riehle citing that screening the solar panels will not alter the overall negative impact of the building on the historic district. Trimble offered the amendment that the owner/applicant explore screening of the solar panels on the north end of the roof to blend with the building. The amendment was approved 7-1 (Riehle). Chair Manning stated this is the first of the solar panel installation requests with HPC will review. Commissioner Trout-Oertel asked if the panels could be relocated to have less impact. Commissioner Laffin replied they cannot be stacked on the east wing. The motion passed as amended 7-1 (Igo). Commissioner Igo stated the solar panels will have a tremendous visual impact on the historic district.

B. 191 Seventh Street East, Individual Site – Walsh Block, by Capitol Guitars, for a sign permit to install awnings. Work was completed without HPC review or a sign permit. **File #10-015** (Boulware, 266-6715).

Staff presented the report recommending denial of the application. Eric Berg and Bill Bergeron, owners, were present to testify. They stated they did not intend to circumvent the system and that their contractor did not get the permit to do the work. They stated that the landlord had removed the awnings and thought they could just reinstall them. The applicants added that they invested \$2500 to install the awnings and that new awnings would cost them \$3500. Mr. Berg showed examples of awnings in Lowertown and downtown to the HPC. Commissioner Laffin stated he sympathized with the expense and offered the example of the process that Golden's Deli had gone through after installing awnings without a permit or HPC approval. Chair Manning stated the applicants may have some issue with the property owner and sign company. Commissioner Riehle commended the applicants for coming to the HPC and their research and added that the sign company should be responsible, as they did not receive approval for their work.

Rachel Westermeyer, owner of 1935 Summit Avenue, testified that she has awnings on her home and worked with her company and the HPC. Ms. Westermeyer suggested the applicant work with a company that could superimpose an appropriate awning design on plans for HPC review.

The public hearing was closed. Commissioner Trout-Oertel motioned for denial of the application based on staff recommendations. Commissioner Ferguson seconded the motion. Commissioner Laffin commented on the color of the awning and suggested the Capitol Guitar logo on the T-Shirt as an appropriate logo for their awnings/signage. Commissioner Trimble suggested sending a letter to the awning company regarding the violation and Commissioner Igo stated that the property owner has some responsibility in this matter. The motion to deny passed 8-0.

C. 223 Bates Avenue, Dayton's Bluff Historic District, by Global Systems Inc., for a building permit to add a dormer/egress and new stairs and landings to the west elevation of the building. **File #10-016** (Boulware, 266-6715).

Staff presented the report recommending denial of the application. Peggy Dunette, owner, was present to discuss the application. She explained how she came to be the

owner of the property and the issues of the upper unit regarding meeting fire code need for a second exit. Commissioner Trimble suggested talking to Historic Saint Paul about design and financial assistance. Commissioner Riehle had questions about the number of units in the building and Commissioner Laffin inquired about the cost of repairs and alterations. Ivan Priem, the contractor, discussed the deck and location of the proposed dormer/exit. His intention is to minimize the visual impact of the exit. Chair Manning asked if the existing dormer could be used and was informed it was too close to the existing exit. Commissioner Ferguson suggested replacing the skylight with a dormer for exit and matching the shape and proportion of the existing dormers. Staff explained that the construction of an appropriately scaled and detailed dormer on the western roof plane would not be an issue, but the impact of the exterior stairs and landings.

Trimble motioned to layover the item to allow time for the owner/applicant to work with staff and contact Historic Saint Paul for assistance. Ferguson added that Historic Saint Paul could offer design help. Commissioner Igo seconded the motion. The motion to layover the item was approve 8-0.

D. 2115 Summit Avenue, Summit Avenue West Historic District, by Opus Northwest Construction, LLC, for permits to construct the new 225,000 sq. ft. Anderson Student Center at the northeast corner of Summit and Cretin Avenues. **File #10-017** (Spong, 266-6714). The public hearing would be conducted and continued at the April 8 meeting in order to have quorum. Staff read the report recommending conditional approval and explained there were two pre-application reviews conducted in November 2009. New commissioners would be sent the minutes from those meetings to inform them of earlier discussions.

Staff showed photos and a flyover as requested by the HPC at the last pre-application review.

The intersection and paving changes for Summit and Cretin Avenues will be reviewed at the April 8 meeting. Commissioner Trout-Oertel commended staff on thoroughness in recapping past reviews.

Doug Hennes from the University of Saint Thomas and Dan Young-Dixon of Opus were present to discuss the project. The student center will be a signature building for the university and a "front door" to the campus. They are amiable to working with a design review committee on more specific details. Young-Dixon gave an overview of the project and the previous discussions with the HPC. The Anderson Student Center will be a three-story, 225,000 square foot building with an L-shape plan and a Kasota stone exterior in a random ashlar coursing with clay tile roof. The new athletic center is currently under construction at the site and a mock-up panel is already at the site, as the athletic center employs the same materials as proposed on the student center. Young-Dixon showed the massing, scale, setback in a site plan and discussed the materials and details of the entry, windows, wall and service doors and landscaping. He detailed how features of the new building would relate to Aquinas and Roach Halls. He explained they would come back with more detail on garage/service doors on the Cretin elevation and screening. There were two landscaping/screening plans proposed for the Cretin garage doors. Plans were proposed to WSNAC and the preference is to plant evergreens. He clarified that the Low e glass would be clear. No raw metal finishes were proposed. The depth of the mullion would not replicate Aquinas and Roach Halls, but the scale of the windows would. The proposed wall on the Summit Elevation would be for pedestrian control and plantings would be installed on the campus side.

Commissioner Igo had questions about the walls and plantings. Cast stone caps with a Kasota stone base are proposed that would be a seating wall closer to the entrance.

Commissioner Laffin suggested adding more detail to the building, as it is "predictable" in the roof ridge, gables and windows. Young-Dixon replied that the design of the campus side is more "whimsical" and the Summit elevation would continue the Collegiate Gothic design of the campus. Laffin stated that the roof lacked variation and ornamentation. Commissioner Trout-Oertel stated the square plaza doesn't relate to anything else on campus and asked if landscape could control pedestrian traffic rather than the construction of a wall. Hennes replied that the wall would be necessary and have proved to be successful at other locations on campus.

Leo Viktora, 2129 James Avenue, volunteer member of the Macalester-Groveland Community Council and serves on WSNAC, presented and handed out a statement from WSNAC in support of the application with a few recommendations and comments about the wall and the functions of the Cretin Avenue side and need for screening with tall coniferous trees and better designed garage doors.

Staff read two emails into record in support of the proposal.

The public hearing will be resumed at the April 8 meeting.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **A.** 3M Committee update (Trimble, Mazanec) the next meeting dates were announced and staff added they will not be able to attend the Monday meeting due to a scheduling conflict.
- **B.** Public Safety Building update (Manning, Igo) finalize three sites to recommend for designation study as part of the mitigation at the next meeting. Manning noted the recent press.
- **C.** Preservation Awards Committee (Igo, Laffin, Trout-Oertel) nomination deadline is April 12.

VIII. ADJOURN: 8:05

Submitted by: Christine Boulware